STANDING UP TO LIFE

GOOD POSTURE and FOOT HEALTH

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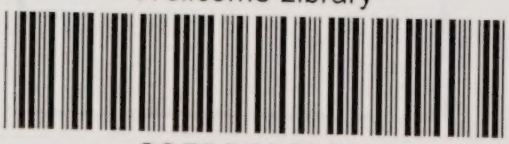
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Standing Up to Life

Importance of Good Posture and Foot Health

STAND STRAIGHT and sit straight for good looks, for health and for self-confidence. Begin early to teach your children to carry themselves well, so that they will grow into strong, straight, well-built men and women.

Those who "stand up to life" are likely to feel much better than those who slouch.

Correct posture helps the organs of the body do their work properly, with less wasted effort. It is a sign of self respect and plays an important part in winning the respect of others. The sloucher is likely to be a person who looks upon himself as a failure. His posture may unconsciously reflect his own poor opinion of himself and pass this opinion on to others.

Correct Standing Position

To stand correctly, stand as tall as possible without rising on the toes—head up, chin in, shoulders even and comfortable, chest out, spine as straight as possible, arms hanging naturally at the side, abdomen in, knees straight without strain, heels two to four inches apart, and toes pointing straight ahead. An easy way to take the correct position is to stand with your back to a wall, with

the head, hips and shoulders touching the wall, and the heels one to four inches away.

Correct Sitting Position

In sitting, bend from the hips and not from the middle of the back or shoulders. The body and head should be held in a straight line.

Chairs should allow the feet to rest squarely on the floor, and chair backs should fit and support the curves of the body. Desks and work-tables should be just high enough so that the forearms and hands may rest upon them without the shoulders being hunched up. If the correct posture is taken, the head will be erect, the arms will have support, the chest will expand easily, the shoulders will be on a level, and the back will be straight.

Correct Lying Position

Since a third or more of each twenty-four hours is spent in bed, it is important that, in sleeping, the body should not be bent, and that it should be stretched as long and straight as possible. Those who suffer from cold feet when they are in bed may get relief by straightening out the body. If pillows are used, they should not be too high. In the case of children, it is especially important that the sleeping posture be correct, so that the spine will be properly shaped.

What Posture Does to the Body

If the case of a watch is badly bent, bits of its delicate machinery may be thrown out of place and the watch may not keep correct time. In the same way, if the framework of

the body becomes misshapen, the organs within it may suffer. A slumping posture may push the stomach, intestines and other organs of the abdomen downward and crowd them against one another so that they cannot work properly. It may keep the lungs from expanding to their full capacity and thus prevent the blood from being properly purified. It may affect the action of the heart. Organs misplaced in this way often suffer for a long time in silence, but sooner or later the general health of the body may be injured and its power to resist disease possibly lowered.

School children who have poor posture are said often to average lower in attendance and in school mental and physical activities than those who have good posture.

Causes of Wrong Posture

Wrong posture is caused usually by one or more of the following conditions:

1. Malnutrition and getting over-tired.
2. Carelessness.
3. Holding one position for too long a time.
4. A wrong mental attitude (lack of self-confidence and self-respect).
5. Misfitting garments, which continually push or pull the body out of its right position.
6. Bad eyesight. A nearsighted person usually pushes his head forward to see more easily. Properly fitted glasses would improve not only his sight, but his posture as well.
7. Foot-arch troubles. A flat-footed person rarely walks or stands properly.

Many cases of bad posture are due to general weakness of the body; others to a lack of enough weight, properly distributed, to give it balance. Bad posture from physical weakness is quite frequent among children. The first need is to bring the child up to normal weight and strength. The posture usually improves as weight increases. When bad posture

is caused by over-fatigue or underweight, the extra strain of corrective exercises may add to the burden and make the condition worse. It is well to take a child who continually stands or sits badly to a medical specialist (orthopedist) or to an orthopedic clinic.

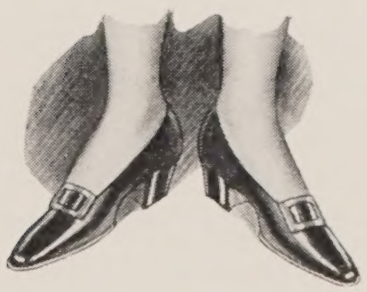
Feet—Foundation Stones of the Body

The feet are to the body what the foundation is to a building. If a stone slips out of place in the foundation of a building, a crack may appear in the topmost ceiling. If the feet become weakened or flattened, the effects may be felt clear to the top of the head.

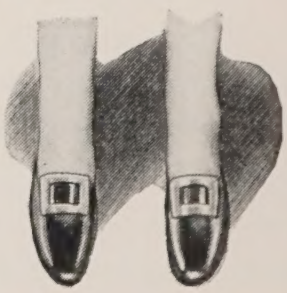
Correct Position of Feet in Standing

Most foot troubles come from an improper use of the feet in standing and walking—sometimes an incorrect posture is taken because of the pressure of an uncomfortable shoe, sometimes because of carelessness or ignorance.

In standing, point the feet straight to the front and place them from two to four inches apart. Support the weight on the outside of the feet. Frequently remind yourself of this correct position while standing by "gripping the floor" with all the toes. This exercise lifts the long arch and places the whole foot in a correct position. Standing for a long time in this position is less tiring than when the feet are turned out or the ankles are allowed to bend in.



LEFT—*Incorrect position of feet.* RIGHT—*Natural position—toes straight ahead. Best for comfort and for work.*



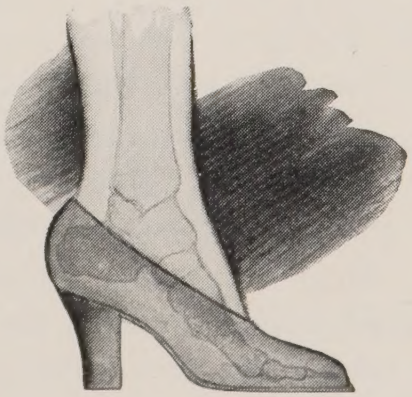
Faulty Shoes Cause Foot Misery

Shoes should be so made that the inner edge of the sole is straight. When the inner edge of the sole curves toward the middle of the toes, it crowds the toes and forces the great toe into an unnatural position. Shoes should be long enough and wide enough for the toes to lie straight and slightly separated. They should be roomy over the toes, and fit snugly around the heel and over the instep.

Take plenty of time when buying shoes. Try on both shoes of a pair. Shoes may seem to be comfortable when you stand with your weight distributed upon both feet, but when you throw all the weight upon one foot, the shoe may feel quite different, and you may find it not at all comfortable.

Some women say they must wear high heels to be comfortable. Yet high heels are undoubtedly the cause of many sore feet, aching backs and touchy tempers. They are frequently the cause of the falling of the front arch, painful callouses, contracted toes and corns.

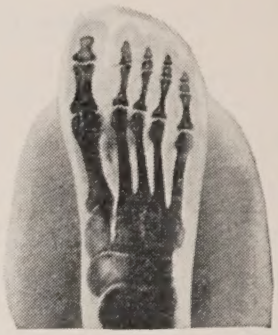
High heels tend to tilt the body forward unnecessarily in standing and walking. When that is done, the body must use muscular effort to hold itself upright. In doing so, the spine may be curved unnaturally and the abdominal organs thrown out of place.



An adventure in vanity—often disastrous. The high heel makes the foot look shorter, but it throws the bones out of position and puts muscles under strain.

LEFT—*Position of toes in cramped, pointed shoe.*

RIGHT—*Position of toes in roomy, well-shaped shoe.*



Some persons may be able to wear high heels all their lives without injury or discomfort. Others may go for many years apparently unharmed. But usually a time comes, during or after middle life, when both feet and body rebel against unnatural treatment, and ailments of many kinds develop.

If a woman persistently wears high heels, the muscles at the back of her leg will grow short from lack of use. Then, if she tries to come down suddenly to sensible heels or to tennis shoes, she will feel a tremendous strain upon the heel cord. In such cases, relief may be had by going back to the higher heels and coming down gradually to the lower.

Care of Children's Feet

The feet must be carefully watched when the child begins to stand and walk, so that the delicate little bones shall not be bent, and the growing feet be deformed and made weak. Do not give too much encouragement to children to walk. Better walk late than too early.

If a child's ankles interfere in walking by bending inward, the arches are becoming dangerously flattened. See a doctor to prevent serious trouble later.

It is important to teach a child to walk softly and to avoid pounding with the heels. He should also be taught to carry the feet close together, toeing straight ahead and

keeping the weight on the outer edge of the foot. Walking the street curb or following a narrow board in the floor helps a child to learn to control the leg and foot muscles, and trains him to walk on the outside of the foot.

If children's shoes are wisely selected, and their feet are regularly examined, minor defects can usually be corrected and future foot-comfort assured. Fortunately, the fashion in shoes for children today is the broad-toed, flexible shoe. If the children's feet are normal and other conditions permit, let the children go barefoot, and when you must shoe them, use sandals without stockings. A child with normal feet does not need high shoes.

See that the child's stockings are large enough. Short stockings cramp the toes and may deform the foot. It is important, however, that stockings should not be so large as to make bumps and ridges, or crowd the feet in the shoes.

Arch Troubles and Their Causes

The most common foot ailment is that known as "fallen arch," "flatfoot" or "weakfoot." It is the flattening of the long arch that extends from the heel to the great toe. One of the first symptoms is a pain under the arch and up the back of

What is your footprint like?

LEFT—*Flatfoot, great toe bent in, bunion in prospect.*

RIGHT—*Good arches, normal toes.*

the leg. There is a change also in the print made by the wet foot. The normal footprint is narrow in the middle and wide at the heel and at the toes. The flat foot leaves a footprint that is almost the same width through its entire length.

Some persons are born with flat feet, and apparently suffer no distress from them, unless called upon to do an unusual amount of foot work. Persons whose feet become flat, however, feel various pains and aches, become extremely tired after a little walking or standing, and their ankles tend to bend in.

As implied earlier, one of the causes of flatfoot or fallen arch is toeing out. Another is improper shoes; another, lack of exercise for the foot muscles.

A very painful condition of the foot is the flattening of the anterior or metatarsal arch, which extends across the ball of the foot from the base of the great toe to the base of the little toe. At this point, specialists say, 90 per cent. of the foot troubles of women are to be found.

The first warning of any unnatural condition of this arch is pain in the three outer toes and directly under the ball of the foot. Another sign is a painful callous in the middle of the ball of the foot. Such a callous shows that there is irritation in this particular spot, resulting from the arch having dropped.

This trouble is frequently due to a sole that bends down under the ball of the foot and bends up at the sides. This allows the short front arch to drop. The pain may be relieved to some extent by changing to shoes with soles that are flat. A spot of thin padding, about the circumference of a half-dollar, under the ball of the foot, placed slightly back of the center of the arch; or a band of rubber webbing or adhesive plaster bound around the foot, back of the arch, may give relief.

A doctor with special experience in treating feet is needed for foot troubles. It is not wise to buy various arches and supports or special shoes without the advice of a doctor or an orthopedic specialist.

Exercises for Posture

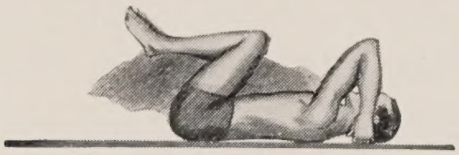
Good posture and strong feet cannot be maintained by will power alone. Trained and adequate muscles are essential.

Many persons are swivel-chair workers. After a few years their back muscles become flabby and are not strong enough to hold them up straight. What is true of the back muscles is equally true of the muscles of the trunk and abdomen. They are not used much, and, if they are not exercised enough, they become soft, they give way, and soon a "bay window" and a hollow in the small of the back develop.

The feet, including the toes, are made for walking. With the growing use of the automobile, and with elevators to take the place of stairs, men and women are walking less and less, thereby frequently causing the foot muscles to become flabby and various foot troubles to develop. Walking in comfortable, well-fitted shoes is one of the best ways to keep the feet healthy. For curing foot troubles, special exercises are often prescribed by the physician.

The exercises contained in this booklet have been used with success in correcting posture defects and developing healthy feet. Ask your doctor if he advises you to use them.

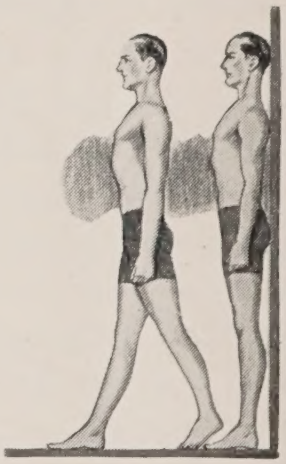
GENERAL EXERCISES



1. Lying on the back, hands back of neck—Take a deep breath and raise chest high; keep chest up and exhale by pulling abdomen in hard.

2. Same position, knees bent, feet pulled up—Pull abdomen in hard and then relax part way; also done standing with hands clasped on top of head.

3. Sitting in a chair, trunk bending forward—Incline trunk forward from the hips, keeping spine straight. This is the position which should be taken when bending forward to write or to do any other kind of desk work. The absence of the lowered chest and rounded back and shoulders of the incorrect position is striking. This exercise may be done standing.



4. Standing Abdominal Retraction—Stand with the heels four inches away from the wall, but with the hips, shoulders, and head touching the wall; flatten the lower part of the back against the wall by pulling in the abdominal muscles. This causes a downward rolling motion in the lower part of the back and flattens the lumbar curve. Holding this position, come away from the wall with the weight well forward on the balls of the feet. This suggests the correct standing position, but it should be held in a graceful, flexible manner.

5. Standing, Leg Raising—Stand with hands on hips, back flat and chin in; raise leg forward without bending the knee; lower it; repeat with other leg. This exercise teaches how to hold the back flat while balancing the body and doing a leg exercise.

6. Carrying the head forward, clasp hands behind the head—Force the head back against their pressure, keeping chin in. This strengthens the muscles of the back of the neck.

7. Spinal Curvatures. "Stand tall," holding the back straight—Rise on the toes with the arms extended forward and up, stretching the arms and the body.

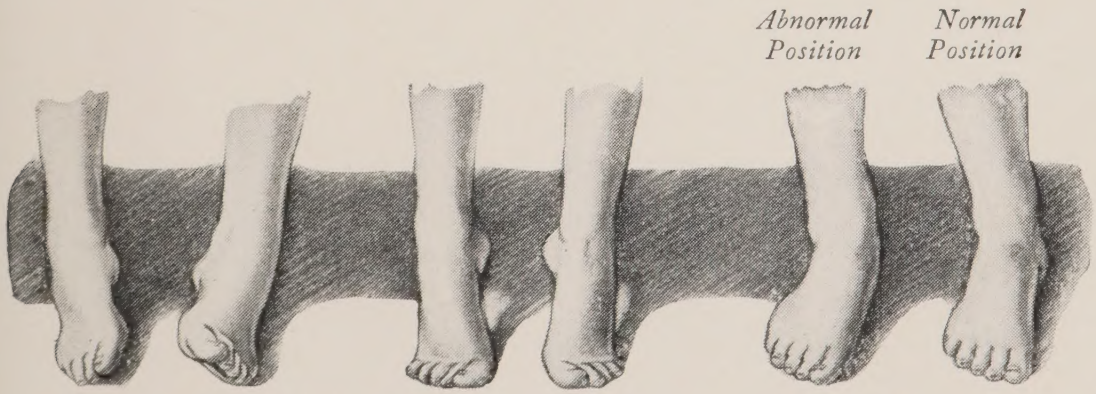
8. Distended Abdomen. This condition may be successfully prevented and largely overcome by doing Exercises 2 and 4.

EXERCISES TO STRENGTHEN THE FEET

Exercise 1. *Outward Roll.* Remove shoes and stockings. Stand with weight on both feet; feet about 6 inches apart. Roll the feet outward twelve to thirty times, so that the weight of the body is supported on the outer edge of the feet. Lift the inner and under parts of the feet clear of the floor at each roll. Do this exercise twice daily.

Exercise 2. *Rising on Toes, barefoot.* Stand with feet parallel, 6 to 8 inches apart. Rise on the ball of the foot, twisting heels inward and trying to grasp the floor with the toes. Do this twenty to thirty times, slowly, morning and evening.

Exercise 3. *Lifting Arch, barefoot.* Stand with feet parallel. From the abnormal position with the feet relaxed and the ankles bending in, tighten up to a straight leg, straight ankle position. This will lift the arch from the floor, and hold it in the normal position. It may not be easy at first to do this exercise without lifting the inner edge of the foot, but the exercise is so helpful that the ability to do it is worth considerable effort. Repeat from twenty to thirty times, morning and evening.

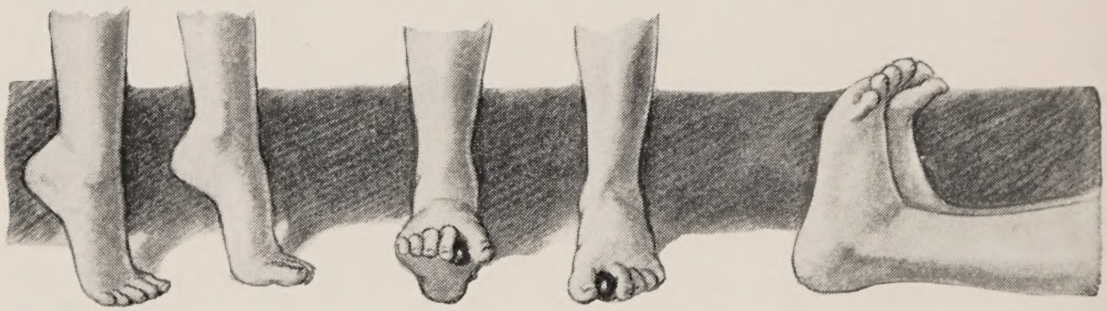


The outward roll *Rising on toes* *Lifting the arch*

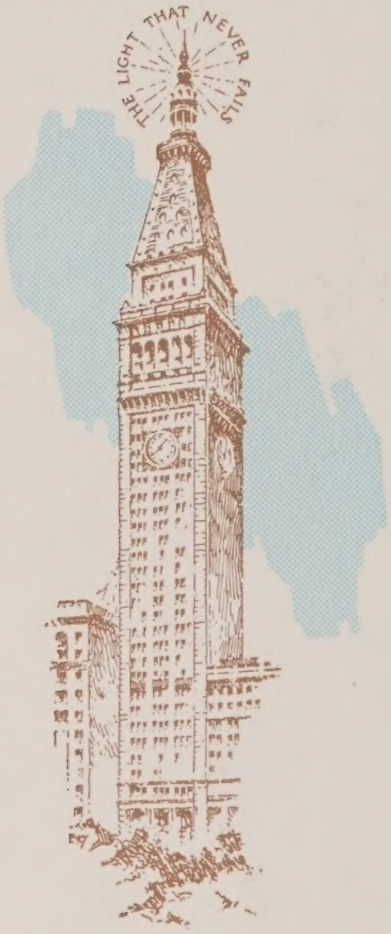
EXERCISE 4. *Walking on Toes, barefoot.* Not so easy, but wonderful for strengthening the toes. Walk on tiptoe until you find you must drop back on the whole foot.

EXERCISE 5. *Grasping with Toes, barefoot.* Grasp a large marble or a small solid rubber ball with the toes, and take as many steps as possible without dropping it.

EXERCISE 6. *Ankle Bending, barefoot.* Sit on a chair, resting your legs on another chair of the same height; your knees stiff; feet and toes stretched out in slightly pigeon-toed position. Then count four, at the same time bending the ankles and bringing the toes toward you as much as possible. You will feel a noticeable pulling of the calf muscles. Do this fifty times, morning and evening.



Walking on toes *Grasping marbles* *Ankle bending*



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